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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

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Dear Sirs, I would like to voice my opinion regarding the case the Justice Department is involved with regarding Microsoft Corporation. Herein my comments:

Unfortunately DOJ and US Courts actions against Microsoft appear to be driven more by Competitors than CONSUMERS! I have over twenty five years of experience in computer and information systems development for both fortune 1 companies and small businesses and have "grown up" with almost every type of computer system imaginable. I have seen everything from the "big blue hand of IBM" as it strangled creativity with its structured products to the free handed "scare tactics" of the UNIX crowd (e.g., SUN, Corel, AOL/Time Warner, AT&T (a hideous monopolist even today)) who shout wondrous promises of "open systems" that to this day are so closed that very few applications run consistently between/among the myriad of UNIX and LINUX variants. For the most part, the UNIX/LINUX crowd is still playing the same old games ... point fingers and shouts negatives about anyone in their gang who proposes a standard that is not in tune with their individual biases. As a result, the world has a UNIX/LINUX platform that is so fragmented that the proponents aren't quite certain how to "pull it together". And they are not listening to CONSUMERS as we vote by buying the products we want! MICROSOFT! Creative, interactive, integrated products that work as expected when needed without a gaggle of technocrats to keep it running.

Let's give credit to a great AMERICAN effort..... Bill Gates and Microsoft.... they pulled together products that are overwhelmingly major customer successes. They created innovative products that deliver innovative solutions to day-to-day business as well as household solutions! WE AS CONSUMERS KEEP BUYING THEM BECAUSE WE WANT THEM! DOJ apparently believes American Consumers are not intelligent enough to make rational decisions. What happened to "majority opinion"? If we don't believe a product adds value to our wealth and lives, we WILL NOT BUY IT! Let the market do its thing! Keep government out of the free market. If Microsoft's competitors create better products, American Consumers will buy them. Microsoft has brought consistency through innovation and creativity to an industry that historically has been overwhelmingly structured and pragmatic at the expense of the every day consumer. I remember when IBM's operating systems for PCs cost over \$500 dollars! Sun Microsystems OS's cost into the thousands of dollars to run their microcomputers. American Consumer's are getting a feature laden, innovative products (Windows OS & Windows Office) at unbelievably low prices. Microsoft has in total brought computing machines into consumer's homes at prices that are affordable! IBM, SUN, etc. would be thriving if they modeled their product offerings after Microsoft (creative and innovative consumer oriented/driven). Microsoft listens..... If their competitors did, they would enjoy the spoils of success

The campaign being waged by the trustbusters lawyers at DOJ and our Courts opens the door to a multitude of private lawsuits This litigation could end up looking a lot like the tobacco industry, with a lot of lawyer time (and FEES) and a big legal process for Microsoft and the computer industry to manage. Almost before the ink was dry on the judge's "finding of fact" lawyers began generating fees by filing class-action suits against Microsoft. Nearly 290 cases are currently pending in 32 states and the District of Columbia. The Justice Department thus spent 40 million+ dollars in TAXPAYER FUNDS to prosecute a case that wiped out at least \$80 billion in privately owned assets of TAXPAYERS and could ultimately obliterate much more. In spite of the warning signs, former Netscape CEO Jim Barksdale (a Microsoft Competitor) continues to peddle the notion that a government-ordered break-up of Microsoft "is the simplest solution."

In reality, the simplest solution is to let the free market work rather than allow government lawyers apply nineteenth-century statutes to the twenty-first century economy. Lawyers making money for lawyers.... what a conflict of interest!

All credible studies I've read regarding consumer opinions regarding DOJ vs. Microsoft have OVERWHELMINGLY been in favor for letting the free market work and keeping the government (especially the DOJ with its 19th century mentality) out of it. Listen to the consumers and not competitors! American Consumers are taxpayers! Give us a break! Clearly these cases are motivated by special interests and not consumer opinion! The DOJ experts for the most part are Microsoft competitors whose products have not competed based on quality, interoperability, and usefulness with Microsoft's products. Apparently they collectively "hired" the DOJ to do their dirty work for them! America was built on the concept of free market and competition with very **limited** government intrusion. America's innovation and creativity has been a bi-product of this approach. Now we reward companies (e.g., Microsoft) who have been creative and innovative by permitting their competitors via the DOJ to blast this great American approach. Get real DOJ.... join the twentieth century! Listen to the consumer! We vote with our buying dollars!

The DOJ, US Courts, and our government must come to grips with the fact that successful American businesses should not be subject to the political whims of anti-capitalist apparatchiks, greedy lawyers, and publicity-hungry politicians who have little understanding of the high-tech economy. Bill Gates created a company worth half-a-trillion dollars, a company now co-owned by tens of millions of Americans (TAXPAYERS!). He created wealth. The would-be regulators can only destroy wealth. In the case of Microsoft, so far they have wiped out at least \$80 billion (and the number is growing). Destroying wealth is not creating wealth. Even Microsoft competitors that "stand to benefit" from the case, including Sun Microsystems, AOL (which owns Netscape), IBM, and RealNetworks all experienced significant declines in share prices as a result of their actions in this regard.

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I guess the competitors who sponsored this DOJ trustbuster event are reaping their rewards now. If they can compete with products of equal or better **quality** with Microsoft, consumers will buy their products! That's what free markets ensure. Drop the ego trip DOJ and get out of the case and let the free market work! We are not a socialistic economy! The money DOJ has spent on this case could have been better spent fighting the real monopolist.... oil companies, mass media, medical companies (doctors, drug companies, providers), auto companies, insurance companies, utilities (especially the government ones like TVA), and the idiotic, egotistical government agencies that refuse to move into the 20th century and act normal. What's next, will the DOJ storm the offices of Microsoft armed with semi-automatic arms and carry away Bill Gates and hold him in some government facility or compound (AT TAXPAYERS EXPENSE) until the DOJ completes stroking its ego?

LISTEN TO THE CONSUMERS DOJ! WE AREN'T AS STUPID AS YOU IMPLY WE ARE. IF WE DON'T LIKE A PRODUCT, WE WILL STOP BUYING IT IRRESPECTIVE OF THE MARKETING AGREEMENTS MANUFACTURERS AND VENDORS MIGHT HAVE. AMERICAN CONSUMERS ARE NOT DUMB! WE DON'T NEED HAND HOLDING; WE ARE MATURE ENOUGH TO MAKE COMPETENT DECISIONS!

Apparently the DOJ needs to observe and learn from AMERICAN CONSUMERS! I do NOT feel that consumers have been harmed by Microsoft; in fact, I firmly believe the economy, consumers, government, and taxpayers owe Microsoft and Bill Gates a warm hearted "Thank you" for the American wealth they created. Microsoft's products are very consumer oriented and deliver functionality that consumers are and have demanded. Admit it DOJ. You made a mistake. Or are you free to admit it?

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